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What are we doing IN CHINA?

BY
JOSEPH
NORTH

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About the Author

JOSEPH NORTH, the author of this pamphlet, is the Editor of *New Masses,* political and cultural weekly magazine, in which he conducts a column, "I Give You My Word." Newspaperman and foreign correspondent for many years, he covered the heroic war of the Spanish people against the fascist Franco-Hitler-Mussolini intervention, and travelled through France, Germany and England shortly after V-E Day. He is the author of numerous pamphlets, and a distinguished lecturer and political analyst.

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By JOSEPH NORTH

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WHAT ARE WE DOING IN CHINA?

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American boys are dying in China today, three months after V-J Day. Why?

You who read this may be the parent, sweetheart or wife of a boy who hasn't returned from the Pacific: you have begun to wonder if he ever will come back. Or whether his fate will be an unmarked grave on a distant Chinese plain, killed in a war that isn't his, dead in a war he didn't want to fight.

Every news cable flashed across the Pacific mocks the news that set you dancing and parading on Main Street or on Broadway a few short months ago. It was all over, we were told. But is it? You are asking why our boys are dying in China, why our armies are marching on Chinese soil, our tanks rolling across Chinese plains, our fleet prowling in Chinese waters. You read with horror that our planes have strafed Chinese villages. Why? What sense does it make?

As this is written we read that American planes are being ferried in hysterical haste to Chiang Kai-shek. The press on November 27 told us *"some 700 fighters and transports are involved in one of the greatest mass flights of the China-Burma-India theater—in such miserable weather that in one hop from Kunming to the Shanghai area twenty-two P51's encountered a terrific weather front and there were eleven crashes."*

Was the life of your youngster snuffed out in that wreckage somewhere on a Chinese crag while you were awaiting him home for Christmas?

The cables told more: *"Loss of American lives in such a postwar operation is clearly hard on the temper of Yanks who are debating angrily whether they ought to be risking their lives three months after the end of the war."*

Our entire nation is "debating angrily." You hear the question argued hotly in every barracks by our outraged, homesick men. Millions of them still quartered in their far-flung Asiatic outposts, questioning where the ships are that will bring them home. "Home by Christmas" has become a bitter jest on their lips. And our people see eye to eye with the soldier quoted in the press December 1: *"We are a pretty sad bunch of fellows here now. . . . We hear news reports daily over the radio about the Chinese war and the United States intention of staying out. We know now that our own country lies. . . ."* Grim words from a patriot who went unhesitatingly to face the enemy for us. His words must be carefully heeded, gravely considered.

When the war ended and V-J Day came, they told our G.I. he would be home in a few weeks, a couple of months at most. Now he feels sold out, betrayed. It is easy to see why.

Diary of a Double Cross

G.I. Joe remembers what General Wedemeyer said in early August: *"My mission to China is to contain, divert and kill Japanese, and to assist the Chinese to accomplish these purposes. No American personnel, no American resources under my control, should be employed against Chinese except to protect American personnel and American property. If it becomes apparent that the deployment of Ameri-*

can personnel is contributing to fratricidal war, I'll do my best to prevent it."

And G.I. Joe remembers what the general said shortly afterwards: *"U.S. troops will not intervene directly in the Chinese civil war because traditional U.S. policy holds that other nations shall be permitted to choose their own form of government without intervention."*

But then in September, General Wedemeyer began a right-about face: *"There is no doubt that the turn of events in an area ambracing half the world's population must inevitably affect our country—economically, psychologically, and perhaps militarily."*

Perhaps militarily! The general had changed his tune and for ample reason. The news had leaked out in such dimensions, that his previous stories no longer held water. Murder will out, and the general had to prepare the American people for many bitter facts. For the truth was that we had been intervening militarily for many months. Even while the general was making the above statements, planes and ships under his command were transporting Chiang Kai-shek's troops not only to the North China front but into Inner Mongolia where armed conflicts between the Kuomintang and the democratic armies led by the Communists were already flaring. We had managed to see to it that the "turn of events" in China General Wedemeyer mentioned were moving in the direction our authorities sought—*in the direction of civil war.*

For the democratic, anti-fascist Yenan government that Chiang is determined to destroy, had warned us as far back as June that the Kuomintang troops were using our lend-lease material in warfare against them. And on August 8, General Yeh Chien Ying, chief of staff of the heroic Chinese Eighteenth Army group, supplied the world with the serial numbers on machine guns manufactured by the

United States Defense Supply Corporation, of New Haven, Conn., and on semi-automatic rifles made by the Inland Manufacturing Division of General Motors—arms his troops had captured from the Kuomintang aggressors.

On August 17 General Wedemeyer replied that delivery of lend-lease equipment to Chiang would cease with Japan's surrender. On September 27 we learned from the New York *Times* that "negotiations" were proceeding for the sale of U.S. Army surplus property to Chiang valued at $150,000,000. The *Times* also said: *"The Chinese [the Kuomintang government] want not only armed surplus in China but also supplies in India and in the Pacific area. The property in the Burma theater alone was valued at half a billion dollars."* (The seven hundred planes flying from Burma are clearly part of this deal.)

Then we learned that U.S. troops will continue to train and advise Chinese Kuomintang army units. Then General Wedemeyer admitted that the U.S.A. will maintain 6,000 army troops and 53,000 marines in China "to help Chiang in the postwar period." Then we discovered that General Chennault would return to China to train the Kuomintang air force. Then, on October 24, we were told that thirty-nine U.S. trained and equipped divisions will stand at Chiang's disposal "in the event China's political strife boils into civil war."

But of course no authority dared tell us the truth: that we encouraged a policy of civil war in China; *we* helped light the fires to guarantee that China's political strife "would boil into civil war." The truth is that we were, and *are* intervening against the Chinese people who, in their overwhelming majority, aspire to end the terroristic dictatorial rule of Chiang's Kuomintang.

How else can Mr. Byrnes explain away the following facts: he has told us that 60,000 American marines are in

North China today to help disarm the Japanese. But our marines landed far from the center of the Japanese struggle in North China. Our troops held these areas until Chiang's armies arrived; and when they got there they did not disarm the Japanese but rushed them against the Chinese Eighth Route Army. (That army did a splendid job against our common enemy, the Japanese, throughout the war.) Our troops were set to guard Chiang's lines of communications, and Americans were put to work controlling railroads *side by side with Japanese troops!* These facts give the lie to Secretary Byrnes' shameful statement that our troops are in China to "implement the terms of Japan's surrender . . . to disarm and to repatriate the Japanese armies in compliance to a promise made to the Japanese authorities last August 16."

The truth is that our troops are in China primarily to destroy the democratic movement of the Chinese people and to enable the Kuomintang to re-establish its dictatorial rule over the country. That was Patrick Hurley's work there. His policy was intervention on Chiang's side at a crucial moment in China's history. Negotiations were proceeding between Chiang and the Communists for national unity, the establishment of democracy and a better way of life for China's 400,000,000. General Stilwell and former Ambassador Clarence Gauss had been working toward that goal before V-J Day. They knew that Chiang was storing the arms he got from us for use in civil war; they knew that the Generalissimo was withholding his troops from action, while the democratic armies and guerrillas led by the Communists did the fighting. Stilwell favored giving arms to all who would fight the Japanese, thereby hastening the day of victory and saving the lives of thousands of Americans. He and Gauss had sought to carry out Roosevelt's policies aimed toward liberalizing

the Chiang Kai-shek government for the common good of the war effort.

Then Hurley came into the picture: General Stilwell and Ambassador Gauss resigned rather than be accessories to Chiang Kai-shek's policies. Stilwell and Gauss knew the comparative war records of the Kuomintang forces and the democratic armies led by the Yenan government, a good basis upon which to judge our friends and our enemies. The contrast between the Kuomintang "contribution" and that of the democratic armies demands consideration.

As Congressman Hugh De Lacy indicated in the House a few days ago: the democratic armies led by the Communists freed thirty-one per cent of the total Chinese areas that had been captured by the Japanese. They freed 94 million people, or 37 per cent of all who had fallen under the invader's heel. They had lost 446,336 soldiers by the end of 1944. They wiped out 1,360,000 Japanese and their quisling puppet troops. *They accounted for three Japanese for every man they lost.* And due to their democratic policies, the people's armies led by the Communists had grown from 100,000 in 1937 to over 900,000 regulars and 2,200,000 militiamen by V-J Day.

We must also remember that thirty-one per cent of this liberated territory was organized into nineteen democratically governed areas, from the Manchurian and Mongolian borders, through northern, central and southern China, to the island of Hainan off the coast of Indo-China.

What Chiang dreams of (and present American policy is to see that his dreams are realized) is to oust the democratic Chinese from these liberated areas and to smash the social, economic and political progress that had been achieved there. That is the rock-bottom meaning of our intervention. This lies behind our unctuous words of

helping Chiang disarm the surrendered Japanese armies.

We are sending our troops into Liberated Areas to hand these territories over to Chiang whose troops never fought for them.

Needless to say, so shameful a policy could not be revealed to the American people. So our authorities have masked their deeds with the fairest of words. In fact, the imperialists of America always utter high-sounding phrases, quote the Bible, when they embark on the dirtiest deeds. The authorities at first sought to allay our fears and suspicions. They wanted time to get their dirty work under way. They feared an explosion of protest from our freedom-loving, fair-minded American people. So we were to be led down the garden path gently.

But murder will out. Now former Ambassador Patrick Hurley, in his astoundingly revealing letter of resignation has confessed the dire, anti-democratic, imperialistic, anti-Soviet conspiracy in which he and his war-mongering accomplices in Republican circles and within the Administration are engaged.

Why We Intervene

Our Administration is doing this dirty work on behalf of a clique of greedy imperialists in our country who prefer China divided against itself, weak, semi-colonial, so that it would do the bidding of such concerns as Standard Oil. Remember that former Ambassador Hurley is a big oil man. He was a friend of Edward Doheny, of the Teapot Dome oil scandal: a demand has been raised in Congress to investigate the charge that he is on Standard Oil's payroll to the tune of $75,000 a year.

A marine in a North China town sums it up in a letter to his wife that was quoted in the press December 2: *"Things are back to 'normal' here, with the news that 26*

Standard Oil men are in town and ready to take up their duties. They arrived here today; now the last piece of the jigsaw puzzle is in place. The boys are passing sarcastic remarks about 'whose property' they are here to protect."

Our Administration is operating on behalf of America's war-enriched bankers and industrialists hungry to grab control, domination, of every part of the world. Furthermore, they want China under our control so that they can use it as a base against the Soviet Union in the Far East. This is the Far Eastern reflection of American imperial-

ism's world-wide drive against the Soviet Union. If this policy is not checked and smashed by the American people it will head us directly into World War III.

That is the meaning of the policy of backing Chiang Kai-shek against the democratic forces of China.

Inside China

To get a more complete picture of our criminal Chinese policy, we should examine China itself for a moment. Who is Chiang Kai-shek and his Kuomintang that we are supporting? What is the picture within China today?

Most of this giant nation of 400,000,000 strive heroically to discard the feudal, pro-fascist setup in Chungking which has condemned China's teeming millions to economic serfdom. It wants to keep them in that status. The big landowners seek coolie labor from sunup to sundown for a few grains of rice daily (the lowest living standard in the world). The speculators want unbridled license to continue their fabulous traffic and the bankers want untrammeled profits. Democracy would hinder all this.

Four thousand years the Chinese peasants have tilled the rich lands of the great landlords who rob them of 60 to 80 per cent of their fruits, perpetuate their poverty, keep them in misery and ignorance. These landlords, merchants and bankers govern the Kuomintang regime.

It was not always so. Under the leadership of Dr. Sun Yat-sen the Kuomintang originally was formed to create unity in the country for independence and the establishment of democracy. Dr. Sun sought to lift China from its weak, semi-colonial, divided state. In 1924 the basis for that national unification was established through the unity of Kuomintang and Communist. China made strides against the warlords and toward the betterment of the peoples' lot. But in 1927 Chiang sold out, courted sup-

port from the imperialist nations, incorporated the big landowners, bankers and merchants as his base of support, and instituted an unprecedented reign of terror that cost the lives of millions of democrats, particularly the Communists. Since that time, except for brief intervals, he has sought to strengthen the Kuomintang dictatorship against all democratic forces.

Fearful that the Japanese invader would rob them of everything, the Kuomintang became anti-Japanese, but only *passively* so; more fearful of the growth of democracy at home, it continued *actively* anti-democratic. But democratic China, mobilized and led by the Communists, fought a heroic, epic fight. Chiang regarded the democratic forces led by the Communists as his "No. 1 Enemy" and the Japanese as the "No. 2" enemy. Throughout the resistance, he plotted large-scale civil war; kept his best-armed troops, over half-a-million, in readiness to suppress the people's democratic movement with steel, torture and death. He withheld arms and even medical supplies from the armies that battled the invader from every tree and from every hillside. He kept most of the material he got from us for purposes of the civil war he planned against the Chinese democrats. He governed the Kuomintang-ruled areas with blood and steel, clamped down a dictatorship.

In his areas, traditionally the richest productive centers of China, the bulk of the produce went into the hands of the Kuomintang authorities and traders while the soldiers starved. Scandalous war profiteering by officials, a lucrative black market business, vast corruption, earmarked the Kuomintang-controlled areas.

This violated the patriotic spirit of the Chinese people and Chiang's troops. As a consequence the Kuomintang armies shrunk to half their former size, lost their morale. Chiang's government created a wide gulf between itself and

the people. A serious crisis of poverty, discontent and revolt resulted in the Chungking-controlled areas.

And remember this: nobody ever elected the Kuomintang regime. There has never been, outside of the Yenan Border Region and the Liberated Areas, a popular election in all China's history. Chiang climbed to power as a military figure; the people never chose him.

Yet it should be understood that the democratic upsurge within China is so strong that it affects even some portions of the Kuomintang, which is not a unified party by any means. Great dissatisfaction can be found in its armed forces and in its various government, economic and cultural organizations.

Scores of millions of Chinese have contrasted the Kuomintang-controlled areas and the democratic areas led by the Communists, and have come to significant conclusions. Our authorities fear those conclusions, which favor democracy and cooperation with the strongest democratic force in China today—the Communists.

What China's Communists Want

What do the Communists want? Let Mao Tse-tung, the head of the Communist Party tell you. He said in an address before its Central Committee earlier this year:

"We want to build, after annihilating the Japanese aggressors, a form of state based upon the overwhelming majority of the people, on the united front and the coalition of democratic parties and groups."

The pattern for this can be found in the Liberated Areas and in the Yenan Border Region where democratic coalition exists, instituted by the Communist Party. There the governing bodies are chosen by the electorate and reflect the composition of the populace. A wide variety of writers have attested to these facts; their books and

dispatches have been appearing for several years, and their first-hand testimony is available for anybody who seeks truth. They include Harrison Forman, Gunther Stein, Ilona Ralf Sues, Edgar Snow, and certain correspondents of the New York *Times* and New York *Herald Tribune* who visited the Yenan region last year. Reforms have been instituted to improve the living conditions of the people; land rents have been reduced by twenty-five per cent; cooperatives have been formed and the government seeks to guide the people toward higher standards, and to protect their democratic way of life. In essence, the program is to win human dignity for the people.

This program has earned the enthusiastic support of the 100,000,000 people who live in areas liberated by the people's armies led by Communists. Though the Chinese Communists proudly admit their ultimate socialist goals, they state clearly that socialism is not the issue today. The issue is the creation of a modern, democratic state.

Tung Pi-wu, Chinese Communist leader, summed it up thus:

"The basic character of the fighting, people's economy is capitalism of a new democratic type. It recognizes private ownership and private gains, but economic endeavors are guided along cooperative and public channels as far as possible to increase the efficiency as well as to assure a fair distribution of social income so that more and more human energy may be saved for higher social-economic development, and China may thus become eventually a democratically industrialized nation."

The Communists have won widespread support as champions of the democratic upsurge in China. The vast majority despise feudalism and the pro-fascist Kuomintang dictatorship. Unfortunately, outside the Border Region of Yenan and the Liberated Areas, the people dare mani-

fest their desires only at risk of liberty or life. Chiang has not merely one gestapo setup in operation: three terroristic, secret organizations work to stamp out democracy by torture, imprisonment and death.

Despite this, the yearning for democracy is so powerful that within Chiang's areas six democratic political parties exist. They are known as the Democratic League and range from conservative to progressive: all advocate a national democratic unity that includes the Communists. Such figures as Madame Sun Yat-sen, Sun Fo and General Feng Yu-hsiang openly support national unity.

Nor are they all: millions of Chinese, in addition to those in the various parties, want peace and national unity. Recent dispatches tell of student demonstrations in the Kuomintang-controlled area of Kunming which were fired upon by Chiang's gendarmes. Here are revealing extracts from an open letter to Americans adopted at one such meeting: "We can never forget your help in defeating the Japanese fascists. But if you now join with the instigators of the civil war, even though against your own will, you will lose the friendship of the Chinese people." (New York *Times*, December 13, 1945.)

The Communists have sought all along to cement the unity of their nation through negotiation with the Kuomintang. Such discussions have been taking place for months. The Communists have always been willing to make the necessary concessions but the negotiations failed because the Kuomintang never genuinely favored unity or democracy. Chiang has tried, in these negotiations, to trick the Communists into surrendering their armies and their political strength in order to bolster the Kuomintang dictatorship. The Communists were ready to make concessions but demanded that the Kuomintang prove good faith by removing the principal barriers to democracy. The

Communists have urged the following conditions for successful negotiations: the release of all anti-fascist political prisoners; the withdrawal of all troops blockading the Border Region and the cessation of attacks upon the democratic armies; the elimination of restrictions on freedom of speech, assembly, press and association; the abolition of the secret police.

Do these seem onerous conditions for successful negotiations? What democrat can deny their logic and justice? But Chiang will never concede so long as the policies of Patrick Hurley, Secretary Byrnes and President Truman remain what they are today.

The truth is that had we not intervened Chiang would have been obliged to yield in the direction of unity and democracy, away from civil war. His position had been weakened during the war because of widespread knowledge of his government's corruption and inefficiency. The democratic forces of China, leagued with the Communists, would have forced Chiang's hand.

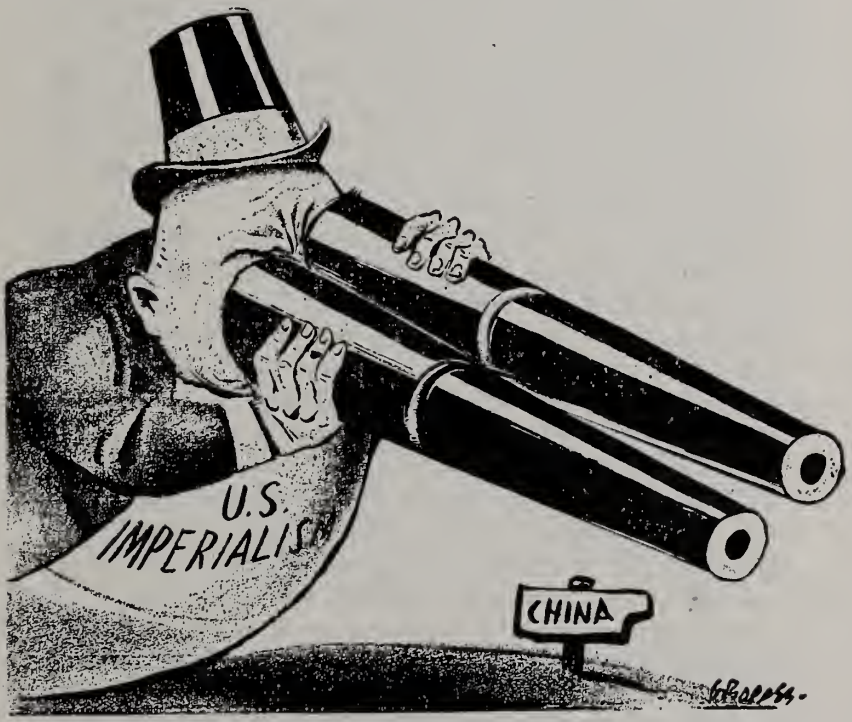
But Ambassador Hurley, carrying out American imperialist policy, decreed otherwise. Conniving behind the scenes, he encouraged Chiang to renege on prior agreements made with the Communists, and the dictator embarked upon a course leading to widespread civil war—*backed by our arms.* This is what Hurley achieved in China.

Where America Stands Today

At this point it behooves us to examine our policy further, and to evaluate its full implications. Several days ago six members of Congress introduced a resolution demanding that our troops be taken out of China immediately. They are Reps. Hugh De Lacy, John M. Coffee, Charles R. Savage, of Washington, Ellis E. Patterson, Ned

R. Healy and Helen Gahagan Douglas, of California. They said: *"Our armed intervention is blocking the development of China and creating the conditions for another great war."*

They tore into Patrick Hurley's policy. The next day Hurley resigned his ambassadorship and issued a statement that has brought the Chinese issue to a head. Hurley had consistently sought to commit the administration to an all-out, 100 per cent naked aggression in China instead of the relatively "slow" pace (as he saw it) of our govern-



ment's intervention. He concentrated his attack upon professional "career men" in our State Department who had sought to carry out the Roosevelt policy in China.

But he reserved words of praise for President Truman and Secretary Byrnes. His differences, he indicated, were not with the latter but with those who favored the unification of China toward the goal of democracy and economic betterment. Like all pro-fascists, Hurley flung the word "Communist"—the word he hates most—at anybody who differs with him, a device of the late Joseph Goebbels. The forces of democracy in China were all "Communist" and anybody who favored cooperation with all democratic groupings in China were "pro-Communist."

As Rep. De Lacy said, "Japan also argued it was intervening in China against 'Communism.' After all the blood that has flowed since Pearl Harbor we will not now be fooled to dress military conquest in the shopworn garments of anti-Communism."

Because Hurley's policy has not gone well with the American people, he resigned—clearly a victory for all who favor a unified, peaceful, democratic China. Millions of Americans have been expressing their anger, their disagreement with the Hurley policies; telegrams, letters, expressions of protest were flooding our authorities in Washington. And our people wanted our boys back from the Pacific, from China, as quickly as possible. Hence Hurley's bitter blasts in the press and before the Senate Committee that seek to divert attention from himself. As one Congressman put it: "Hurley is trying to put somebody else on trial when actually it is Hurley who is on trial."

But there is nothing at this time to indicate that the Truman Administration has changed its present Chinese policy. On the contrary, its designs remain crassly imperialistic, and inimical to all the agreements signed to pre-

vent World War III. It is continuing the Big Stick policy expressed by President Truman on Navy Day. Intoxicated with the power of the atom bomb, the President has forsaken the policy which elected Roosevelt and himself, the policy of Big Three unity of the United States, Great Britain and the Soviet Union, the only way to win a lasting peace. The Administration has committed itself to an anti-Soviet policy, is reneging on the Potsdam and Teheran agreements, and is everywhere trying to build an anti-Soviet coalition.

As the six Representatives mentioned above put it:

"If America continues to lend its great power to the establishing of anti-Communist bases in North China, that will have its own logic. That logic is the logic of the most reactionary of American big-businessmen wanting unrestricted exploitation of Asia. It is the logic of dollar imperialism. . It is the logic of a new world war, this time against the Soviet Union, launched from great bases in the Pacific, from a Japan whose militarists we have not yet rooted out, from anti-Communist bases in North China."

This is the complete, dreadful logic of our present policy in China. And for this reason the American people must demand the removal of Secretary of State Byrnes who shares full guilt with ex-Ambassador Hurley. Byrnes must go as a step to force our government's return to the course avowed by the late President Roosevelt—the cooperation of nations, the furtherance of world-wide democracy, the continuance of Big Three unity within the United Nations.

This course guarantees the right of self-determination of nations; it is in our national interest and it is the desire of our people.

This course would genuinely make friends of Asia's billion people who view our present actions with alarm and growing hatred. It would aid China become a truly demo-

cratic, industrial democracy which, in turn, would help America tremendously as a vast, friendly market and a partner for security and democracy in the Far East and throughout the world.

We know the vast majority of Americans favor this course. Their overwhelming desire for it forces its reflection into some of our press, in addition to the labor and Communist journals of the country. You find it, for instance, in such a publication as the Buffalo *Evening News* which said editorially November 13:

"It was an insignificant incident and it happened on the other side of the world. But those who sit in the seats of the mighty in Whitehall and Washington had better take note of the refusal of the crew of the British troopship Moreton Bay to sail from Sidney with 1,600 Dutch troops being sent to suppress the Indonesian Republic.

"It was only four years ago that President Roosevelt and Prime Minister Churchill proclaimed the Atlantic Charter with its four freedoms. It is no part of the duty of our great democracies to suppress a struggle for Javanese independence; nor are we commissioned to lend our ships or soldiers to sustain the power-hungry autocrats of Chungking against the agrarian reformers of Yenan.

"The British sailors in Sydney Harbor spoke for the common man in America as well as the British Commonwealth when they shouted, 'Hands off Java.' We want no hand in re-shackling colonial millions whose offense has been that they hoped we meant our wartime promises. Liberty must be more than a word and hope deferred maketh the heart sick."

That expression reflects the feelings of all honest, democratic Americans. Let it be a warning to President Truman who cannot escape central responsibility for our criminal policy.

The Communist Party of the U.S.A. has consistently campaigned for a program that would win the peace as well as the anti-fascist war. Twelve thousand of its members went to the fronts ready to give everything for these goals. To ensure them it urges the American people, and labor in the first place, to turn every energy toward re-establishing President Roosevelt's policy toward China. It urges the formation of the broadest, anti-fascist, democratic front for these purposes.

Immediately, the Communist Party has determined to hold 500 demonstrations throughout the land for this purpose, and it urges all freedom-loving Americans to join in a powerful, nation-wide campaign of demonstrations, meetings, telegrams and letters to our State Department and to President Truman, proposing:

1. That our troops be immediately removed from China.

2. That we halt all shipments of material to the Kuomintang which clearly is using them for civil war against the democratic forces of China led by the Communists.

3. That the question of China, as of all other international issues be resolved by Big Three and Big Five unity, pursuing the spirit of the agreements of Potsdam and Yalta.

The course of history can still be effected toward world cooperation and lasting peace. But it requires militant, unified action. It requires selfless devotion, the spirit in which so many brave Americans and soldiers of the United Nations died. Only in this way can our American parents, wives, sweethearts get their boys home from the fronts quickly, to help us create a post-war world pursuing the goals of prosperity and peace.

But the hour is late and there is no time to lose.

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